

# APPENDIX I

## EDUCATION, ENCOURAGEMENT, & ENFORCEMENT



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### Introduction

Infrastructure is only part of the solution to making a place more bicycle and pedestrian-friendly. Efforts must also be made to address non-infrastructure elements such as unsafe behaviors of all roadway users, safe bicycling skills, and general awareness of bicyclists on the roadway. This section documents existing programs undertaken by the City of Wichita (City), partnering agencies, and volunteer organizations followed by recommendations for revised and additional programs that uphold the vision and goals set forth for the Plan.

It is worth emphasizing the important role that volunteers and advocates will play in improving conditions for bicyclists in Wichita. The City can set the course via policies and infrastructure improvements, but the actual conditions can only be impacted by the actions of all citizens both in daily conduct and organized group actions. Fortunately, there are groups, clubs and individuals dedicated to improving bicycling conditions in Wichita. There are a number of agencies and organizations that could potentially play an active role in encouragement and education efforts, including but not limited to the WAMPO, Wichita Police Department, BikeWalk Alliance of Wichita, Kansas Department of Transportation, the Health and Wellness Coalition of Wichita, Oz Bicycle Club, bike shops, Coasters Club and neighboring jurisdictions. The combined efforts of the City and its partners will help to establish and sustain a bike culture.

### Education

A safe transportation system begins with an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of all residents that use the City's streets, sidewalks, and trails. Education is required to address issues such as wrong-way riding and riding without a helmet, how bicycles and cars can safely share the road, the importance of looking both ways, and compliance with stopping regulations. This information needs to reach as many residents as possible and it needs to be provided in both English and Spanish. Below is a discussion of programs and other efforts focused on educating the public about bicycling safety, some of which the City of Wichita and its partners are already offering or pursuing.

#### Safe Routes to School (SRTS)

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs are sustained efforts by parents, schools, community leaders and local, state, and federal governments to improve the health and well-being of children by enabling and

encouraging them to walk and bicycle to school. The City of Wichita, with support from the WAMPO and the Safe Kids Wichita Area Coalition, has supported SRTS applications in the past. WAMPO and the Safe Kids Wichita Area Coalition have drafted a Regional Safe Routes to School Plan which outlines objectives, goals and strategies for SRTS that should be considered when funding is available.

The majority of Wichita's public schools are located on collector streets and accessibility via walking and biking which would be greatly improved with implementation of the recommended bicycle network. Bicycle and pedestrian safety are skill sets that will benefit the children through their entire lives. Children are being driven more often than children of a generation past, and are given fewer opportunities to practice safe biking and walking skills with their parents<sup>1</sup>. Ensuring consistent, certified instruction for all children of Wichita will help to improve safety for the City's next generations. To support pedestrian education, Wichita Public Schools could be encouraged to adopt the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Pedestrian Safety Curriculum as part of the school physical education annual curriculum. The school district could also continue to support Bike to School Day in which 30 schools participated in 2011. This event is a good opportunity to conduct bicycle education.

### **Wichita Health and Wellness Coalition**

The Wichita Health and Wellness Coalition (WHWC) focuses on promoting physical activity for residents of the Wichita area. WHWC is an active partner in promoting bicycle safety and encouragement through several programs including the Bike Back 2 School Program for students at participating Wichita Public Schools and the Bike Friendly Business Campaign that recognizes businesses that promote bicycle friendliness.

### **Educating Law Enforcement Officers About Bicycles**

It is important for all law enforcement officers to fully grasp the rights and responsibilities of all roadway users. Educating law enforcement officers about the laws applying to bicycles, as well as the operational characteristics of bicycles can help officers better understand what behaviors they should be targeting from an enforcement point of view.

### **Police Education Seminars & Rodeos**

The Wichita Police Department has a Bicycle Unit that is active for special assignments only. Officers in this unit have been certified by the International Police and Mountain Bike Association (IPMBA) to instruct their unit in bicycle operations. Make funding available to support full-time bicycle police, police bicycle maintenance and police led educational seminars and rodeos. As recommended in Strategy 14, these officers or staff of the Community Affairs Section could be certified by the League of American Bicyclists to provide bicycle safety education such as seminars and experiential rodeos. The instructor begins each rodeo with an explanation of bicycle skill expectations for students. Various stations are set up to give students the opportunity to practice a variety of specific bike handling skills for operating a bike safely and legally on the street. Bicycle rodeos are provided during the school day, and at events upon request. Health fairs and safety events should be seen as opportunities to promote safe cycling clinics for children, families and adults.

### **City Website**

The City's website is helpful and functions as a clearinghouse for several important transportation-related resources and the Plan recommends that the City utilize the web site to distribute educational

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<sup>1</sup>National Center for Safe Routes to School, *How to get Children to School*, 2011.

information (Strategy 11). The following actions could be undertaken to expand and enhance the existing City of Wichita website for bicycle and pedestrian-related content:

***Create a more centralized transportation and recreation oriented bike/pedestrian section on the City's website***

The City could expand and maintain an online reference that provides easy access to bicycle laws, safety tips, maps of the bicycle network, as well as links to programs that encourage people to bike more often. Ideally, this information should be presented all in one place on the City's website, or if this is not desired, then links to relevant pages, i.e. 'Transportation Planning', or 'Park and Recreation' should be compiled and provided in one place. As the City's bike program grows, so does the content on the website.

***Register an additional Bike/Pedestrian web address that is more intuitive***

Bicycle and pedestrian related information on the City's webpage could be placed in an intuitive location. This recommendation is not to create an entirely separate website, but to register web addresses that are easier to remember, and to link/forward those web addresses to contents' location on the City website. For example, it is easier to remember and can easily be included in flyers, emails, postcards, etc.

***Add a calendar showing bicycle events***

Posting bicycle events on a monthly calendar would help people become more aware about upcoming events. One example of an existing bicycle related event calendar is the one hosted by the Oz Bicycle Club on their website. The City could also partner with other agencies and interest groups that have bicycling events and publicize information about the events on the City's website, Facebook page, and distribute through email notices. All postings and event information should be available in a format that is accessible and easy to read.

***Continue "report a problem" link to the City's Bike/Pedestrian Webpage***

The City could provide a bicycle issue specific link to the existing "Report an Issue" reporting system for the public to report location-specific problems with City infrastructure. Place a link to the "Report an Issue" page on the Bicycle webpage will help people find the link quickly, while their concern is on their mind. Once comments are submitted on the electronic form, a City staff person is notified and has the tools needed to investigate the concern. This action could help with implementation of Strategy 7, which recommends an action to perform spot fixes for maintenance problems based on an annual work plan and public requests. The website is <http://wichita.gov/ContactUs/Report/Default.htm>.

***Cross-post bicycle-related volunteer opportunities***

Cities can always use help from volunteers. Strategy 7 recommends that the City establish and manage an Adopt a Path Program, there are also many other jobs that enthusiastic citizens can perform – such as helping to distribute flyers. It could be helpful to post any volunteer opportunities related to bicycling on the City's bicycle web page and/or Facebook page. The bicycle web page audience is interested in bicycling and may be willing to volunteer time to improve conditions.

***Cross-post bicycle-related activities and programs***

Several City departments have activities and programs that are in support of bicycling. The City's Parks and Recreation, Planning, and Public Works departments all have projects or programs that either address bicycling directly or have complementary objectives. Cross posting the efforts of other City agencies and departments will make for a more convenient experience for the web user, and will promote cooperation and joint development across City departments.

### **Develop a Comprehensive Safety Education Program**

As resources become available, the City, in partnership with other organizations such as the Health and Wellness Coalition of Wichita, and private industry, e.g. healthcare, could develop a comprehensive safety education program/campaign programs. The tone should be cooperative, emphasizing that all modes need to be aware and respectful of each other on roads and trails. Below are additional activities that should be marketed under the umbrella of an energized and comprehensive program.

#### ***Create a brand for the safety education program***

The City's bicycle program could benefit from having its own identity. Creating brands that can be applied on all new materials will help spread awareness and maintain a consistent message. The brand should be apparent on all activities and products that are associated with the program.

#### ***Create & distribute educational and promotional materials***

Educational and promotional materials such as maps, bumper stickers, billboards, website content flyers, etc. having a unified theme and message can be very effective and raising awareness about bicycle safety and the benefits of driving motor vehicles with care. Many materials could be made available in both English and Spanish.

#### **Promote and support adult bicycle safety classes**

Many adults are unaware of how to properly fit and wear a helmet, signal turns to vehicular traffic and other safe road riding skills. The City could promote adult bicycle fun rides, clinics and engage volunteers that are certified bicycle instructors (by the League of American Bicyclists) to organize and conduct the clinics and rides. Clinics and rides could be posted on the bicycle calendar of events. The City bicycle web page can also provide links to those groups that provide publicly accessible clinics, rides and workshops.

Additionally the City could provide classroom space for bicycle safety workshops. Groups and clubs regularly offer clinics and workshops but have difficulty finding spaces that can provide both classroom space, and areas to practice maneuvers. Several civic buildings have meeting rooms and parking lots that can be used for instruction. These spaces are usually unused during weekend and evening hours. Providing these spaces for free would increase the frequency that clinics and workshops are offered.

### **Encouragement**

Wichita is fortunate to have an enthusiastic cycling community. The City has multiple cycling clubs and groups that promote bicycling in and around the city and organize group rides. While many of the groups are oriented to recreational riding, their members' presence on the roads and paths increases awareness of all cyclists. In addition to recreational riders, the US Census reports that number of residents that cycle for transportation has grown year over year for the last four years.

#### **Bike to Work Day**

The purpose of Bike to Work Day (BtW) is to encourage people to try substituting a bicycle for their car for one day, with the hope that the day's experience will inspire more regular bicycle commuting. The City has partnered with the Health and Wellness Coalition of Wichita, and other organizations to host bike to work events in Wichita; and Strategy 5 recommends that the City continue to actively partner to promote and/or organize special community events to promote cycling. The City could continue to participate in Bike to Work Day and promote greater participation by encouraging its employees to bike to work, as well as holding bike commuter "lunch-and-learn" workshops. Another idea to increase participation is to partner with bicycle shops and other organizations to have a mobile cyclery unit provide free bike tune-ups. The City could also partner with health related organizations, and bicycle groups, and local restaurants to provide a breakfast station and prizes for participants (in addition to the

free lunch offered at previous BtW Day events. The City could seek partners to promote this event, and should explore other strategies for increasing the number of participants.

### Create a Bicycle Facilities Map

A bicycle facility map can be an effective tool for encouraging novice bicyclists to ride more often because it helps them understand key connections for getting to their destination. Strategy 9 recommends that the City should develop a City-wide bicycle facilities map, which should be available in both print and digital formats (downloadable PDF and mobile device format). The map should provide detailed bicycle facilities information (on-street routes and off-street trails), and could potentially include safety tips, bikes on buses information. It could also include a summary of laws and regulations applying to bicyclists. The map could be designed in a format that is also viewable by people using smartphones as these are growing in popularity as navigational tools.

### Bicycles and Transit

Public transit can be an attractive solution for extending bicycle trips. All Wichita Transit buses are equipped with bicycle racks which allow individuals to take their bicycles with them as they travel on the bus. The bus attached bicycle racks can be used at no additional cost.

Another way to combine bicycle and transit trips is to provide secure parking facilities at the transit station and transit bench locations. . People can choose to bike to the transit location, and then take the bus the rest of the way to their destination. Alternatively, people can choose to leave a bike waiting at the transit bench location and bike the rest of the way after the bus ride.

### Partnering

Entities and interest groups outside the City will contribute to the success of the Master Plan. Below is a list of organizations that the City can collaborate with to encourage bicycling, including facilitating, organizing, or cross publicizing efforts.

Health & Wellness Coalition of Wichita – [http://www.hwcwichita.org/HWC\\_Home.html](http://www.hwcwichita.org/HWC_Home.html) The coalition “researches and promotes evidence based programs and interventions” for healthy living in the Wichita area. The coalition has been involved in the Bicycle Master Planning process and administers grants and programs related to promoting bicycling and walking.

Bike/Walk Alliance of Wichita - Bike/Walk Alliance of Wichita is an advocacy group whose mission is to promote running, walking and biking through “advocacy, public education and collaboration”. The alliance may be a good partner in disseminating information or recruiting volunteers.

Bicycle Shops – Wichita has numerous bicycle shops through which education and encouragement information could be disseminated. Shops may also be potential sponsors of events like Bike to Work Day or community races.

Other potential partners include major employers, higher education and other schools

- Wichita State University
- Cowley College
- Southwestern College
- Friends University
- Newman University
- Wesley Medical Center
- Wichita Public Schools

- Wichita Downtown Development Corporation

### **Group Rides**

Whether for recreation or commuting purposes, riding in groups gives novice cyclists confidence to ride both on and off-road, and introduces new and convenient routes for everyday rides. The rides can cover vast areas and provide tours of the City, or they can help people identify comfortable and convenient routes to work. The best rides are those that start and end in the same location but explore new routes and destinations, giving people a new awareness of the Bicycle Network. Group rides have the added benefit of creating a strong bicycle presence on the roads. Strategy 15 recommends that the City should be an active partner with bicycle organizations to organize and promote bicycling events. The Coaster Bicycle Club Health & Wellness Coalition of Wichita, Wichita Department of Parks & Recreation, and area bicycle shops have all been active in promoting bicycle group rides

Students can also benefit from group rides. The Safe Routes to School movement encourages young cyclists to bike to school in groups with adult chaperones. These rides increase the students' confidence in their bicycling skills and establish healthy habits for life. Bicycle trains have been especially effective for high-school aged students, providing a cheaper alternative to driving.

While the actual rides may be led by volunteers from local bicycling organizations, the City's role in this strategy can be to provide resources and materials on planned group rides by including information about the events on the City's website, Facebook, and in email distributions. The City can also link to other groups that produce how-to materials for organizing group rides or bicycle trains to school.

### **Achieve Bronze Level Bicycle Friendly Community Status**

Cities across the nation are applying for Bicycle Friendly Community status recognize accomplishments related to bicycling and guide discussions about local challenges and opportunities for bicycling. The award criteria help to prioritize efforts and strategies to improve existing conditions. Community leaders recognize that the tiered structure of the award (bronze, silver, gold, and platinum) helps to establish milestones for future progress. Once awarded, the League of American Bicyclists (LAB) provides feedback on how to advance to the next level, making it easier for communities to organize next steps for Plan implementation. Finally, the national recognition publicly announces that the Community is committed to enhancing bicycling conditions. As of 2011 there are only 180 formally recognized Bicycle Friendly communities across the country. Strategy 16 recommends that the City should work to achieve recognition by the LAB as a Bicycle Friendly Community.

## **Enforcement**

### **Police on Bikes**

An effective way to engage bicyclists and model safe bicycling maneuvers is to put police officers on bicycles. The Wichita Police Department has a Bicycle Unit. As the bicycle network becomes more developed the City could provide more regular patrols by bicycle-mounted officers. These officers have increased mobility and are more accessible to pedestrians and bicyclists. Police on bicycles also tend to have a more thorough understanding of the rights and responsibilities of all users as they receive specialized training on bicycle safety skills and laws. An added benefit to using bicycles instead of cars is that officers on bicycles travel at slower speeds and are more engaged with their surroundings.

### **Progressive/Educational ticketing**

It is likely that drivers are unaware of bicycle safety legislation. It is likely that many people do not know that Kansas recently passed a law requiring cars to give bicyclists a three-foot buffer when passing or riding alongside them. While it is everyone's responsibility to be educated on current laws, it is more

effective to educate drivers and bicyclists before issuing citations. With progressive ticketing, officers offer educational materials, and then warnings before issuing citations and fines. Offering this grace period allows drivers time to adjust to new laws. This approach can also be applied to bicycle enforcement.

### **Support distracted driving campaigns**

Drivers that are not fully paying attention to the road and other vehicles create unsafe conditions for all modes. Bicyclists are especially vulnerable as they are often hidden in driver's blind spots. Supporting legislation that would prohibit hands-on cell phone use and texting while driving in the state of Kansas will emphasize the City's commitment to ensure safety for all modes.

Schools can also participate by conducting pledges for parents promising that they will not use their cell phones while driving, especially in school zones. The City could also consider adopting an ordinance that allows Police to issue fines specifically to individuals caught using hands-on cell phone devices while driving in school zones.